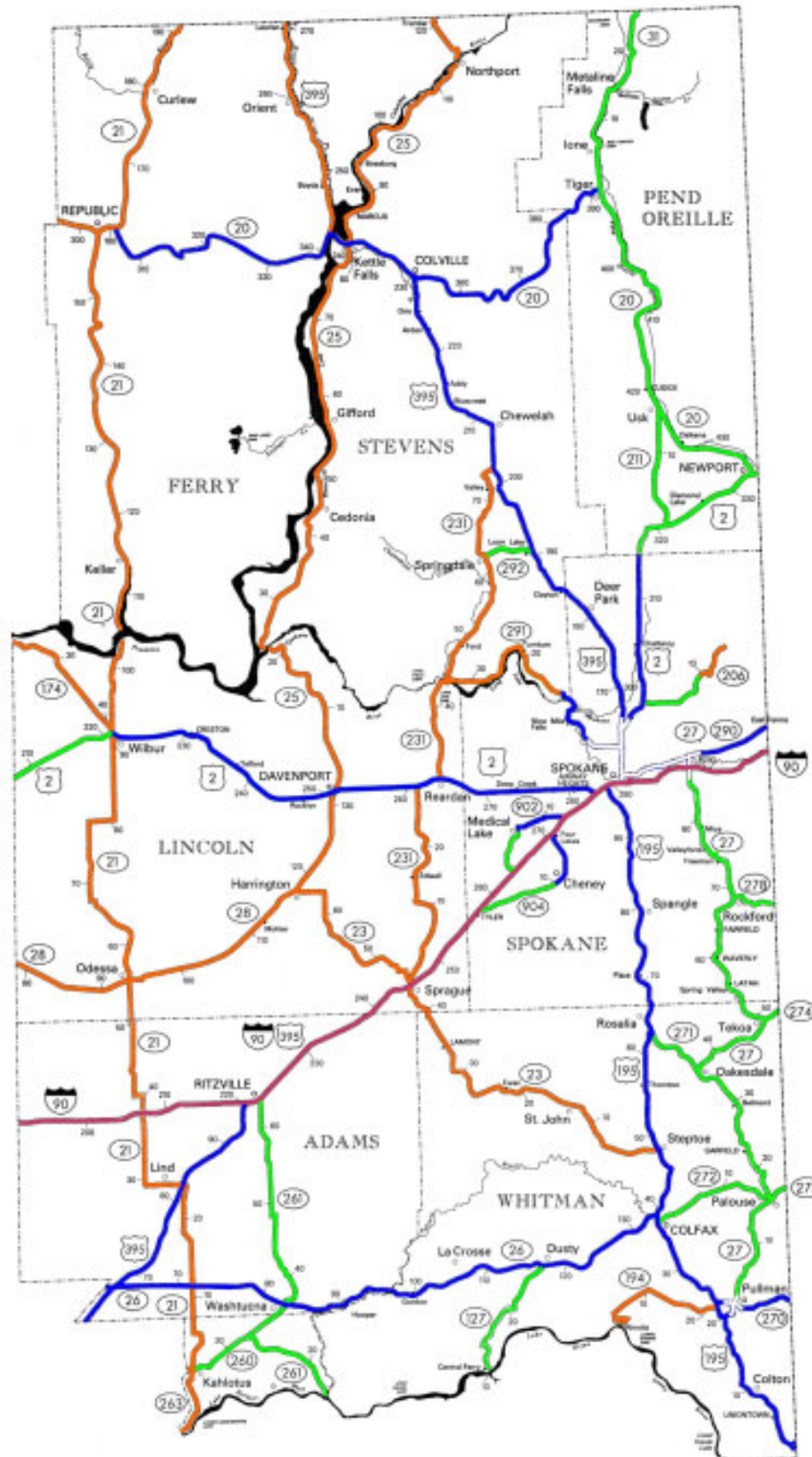


WSDOT Winter Roadway Condition Goals





Snow and Ice Control Level of Service
(Highway colors correspond to chart at right)



Snow and ice control efforts are a balancing act between the forces of nature, available staff, and equipment. All of this costs money. Snow and ice control is the largest expense in the annual Region Maintenance budget.

To make the most efficient and economical use of our resources, the Department has prioritized all state highway sections and assigned a level of service goal. Of course, achieving these goals is very dependent on the severity of the winter weather.

These highway sections have been ranked using traffic volumes, number of steep grades, curves, and other criteria in order to determine the snow and ice control strategy noted in the chart below and the corresponding map.

Roadway Treatment Action	Expected condition after treatments completed
<div data-bbox="1125 657 1196 971" style="background-color: #f08080; color: white; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">LEVEL 1</div> <div data-bbox="1196 657 1665 971"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pretreat as conditions allow with anti-icing chemicals before a forecast snow, black ice, or frost event. 2. Aggressively apply anti-icing chemicals if snow is accumulating to try and keep snow from compacting and bonding to the pavement. 3. If compact snow and ice or heavy black ice forms apply pre-wet solid chemicals to the surface to try to break up the snow/ice for removal. </div>	<div data-bbox="1672 677 2004 893">  </div> <div data-bbox="2004 677 2141 971"> <p>Snow or ice buildup rarely encountered. Bare pavement attained as soon as possible. Travel delays rarely experienced. Only I-90 is maintained at this level within the Eastern Region.</p> </div>
<div data-bbox="1125 971 1196 1288" style="background-color: #4169e1; color: white; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">LEVEL 2</div> <div data-bbox="1196 971 1665 1288"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pretreat as conditions allow with anti-icing chemicals before a forecast snow, black ice, or frost event. 2. Limited applications of anti-icing chemicals if snow is accumulating to try and keep snow from compacting and bonding to the pavement. 3. If compact snow and ice or heavy black ice forms apply a combination of sand and chemicals to try and provide traction and assist in the break up and removal of snow and ice. </div>	<div data-bbox="1672 997 2004 1215">  </div> <div data-bbox="2004 997 2141 1288"> <p>Snow or ice buildup encountered at times, but infrequently. Traveler at times may experience some isolated delays with roads having patches of black ice, slush, or packed snow.</p> </div>
<div data-bbox="1125 1288 1196 1602" style="background-color: #90ee90; color: white; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">LEVEL 3</div> <div data-bbox="1196 1288 1665 1602"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pretreat as conditions allow with anti-icing chemicals before a forecast snow, black ice, or frost event. 2. If snow accumulates, plow without the use of solid chemicals. 3. Sand compacted snow and ice with limited use of chemicals. </div>	<div data-bbox="1672 1314 2004 1536">  </div> <div data-bbox="2004 1314 2141 1602"> <p>Snow or ice buildup encountered regularly. Traveler likely to experience some delays with roads having patches of black ice, slush, or packed snow with only the wheel track bare.</p> </div>
<div data-bbox="1125 1602 1196 1909" style="background-color: #ffa500; color: white; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">LEVEL 4</div> <div data-bbox="1196 1602 1665 1909"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance traction with plowing and sanding. </div>	<div data-bbox="1672 1628 2004 1850">  </div> <div data-bbox="2004 1628 2141 1909"> <p>Compact snow buildup encountered regularly. Traveler will experience delays and slow travel.</p> </div>

Equipment on the Roads

The mainstay of our fleet: the truck-mounted plow/sander combination.



Liquid anti-Icer chemical application. In the Eastern Region either magnesium chloride, calcium chloride or salt brine.

A truck plow with a “wing” blade mounted to the side. NEVER PASS A SNOWPLOW ON THE RIGHT! There may be a wing blade that you can’t see.



A snow blower. These are used for mountain passes and to clear severely drifted highways.

Don't let this happen to you!
Please drive carefully this winter!



Chemicals and sand

In past years, the primary winter traction aid used on state highways was sand. Now, liquid chemicals have become an important component in the snow and ice control program. In addition, rock salt and salt brine have returned as a tool for highway maintenance crews. All of these products have advantages and disadvantages, but the safety aspect of these chemicals cannot be overlooked.

Sand

The Department is using less traction sand than it did in the past. Although sand is still used it has several disadvantages: Sand cannot be applied to a dry highway in anticipation of a storm-it just blows off as a result of vehicle traffic. Sand is pulverized into dust, and during warmer weather creates pollution concerns in many communities. The abrasive qualities of sand act like sandpaper and can remove highway paint markings, plus the flying sand particles can damage vehicle paint and glass.

Liquid Chemicals

Over the past few years, the Department has used liquid anti-icing chemicals in its snow and ice control program. Liquid chemicals such as magnesium chloride are used prior to storm events to keep snow from bonding to the roadway, as a de-icing chemical to melt snow and ice after it has fallen, and as a pre-wetting agent to help keep sand from blowing off the roadway. A disadvantage of these liquid chemicals is the possibility of corrosion on some metals. Although less corrosive than salt, magnesium chloride, like any snow melting chemical, can corrode some metals if left on vehicles for extended periods.

Salt

During the past two seasons, the WSDOT has been testing the use of salt in its snow and ice program. The Department is using rock salt and salt brine in some areas to evaluate its effectiveness and analyze corrosion. The advantage of salt is its cost and snow melting capabilities. Of course, salt can cause corrosion in some metals.

Protect your investment-wash your car or truck frequently in the winter

Either salt or magnesium chloride, if left on unprotected metal, can cause some damage to vehicles. As a precaution, it's good advice to wash your car during the winter months. Many commercial or self-serve car washes are located in our region. Sometimes, during warmer days, it's possible to wash your vehicles at home.

Winter Driving Tips

Clear snow and ice from all windows before you drive.

Pay attention. Don't try to out-drive the conditions.

Leave plenty of room for stopping.

Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows. Stay back at least 200 feet and don't pass on the right. Remember, the road behind the plow is better than the road in front of it.

Know the current conditions. Call 5-1-1 or (800)695-ROAD for traveler information.

Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle or with studded tires.

Watch out for slippery bridge decks, even when the rest of the road is in good condition.

Don't use cruise control.

Look farther ahead in traffic than you normally do.

Don't follow too closely.

Slow down!

Winter Snow and Ice Control Program



The winter season and the challenges that nature presents are a part of life in the Inland Northwest. The Maintenance team at the Washington State Department of Transportation/Eastern Region meets that challenge with staff and equipment in an effort to keep the area state highways open and as safe as possible.

However, the most important snow and ice safety component is you. You have the responsibility to make sure that you take extra care



during the winter months. Slow down, don't follow too closely, anticipate stops, give yourself extra time, and be prepared for adverse driving conditions.

